

Furthermore, he has been the ringleader of opposition for immigration reform.

How can we in good faith recommend, nominate, or confirm this person to the post that is solely responsible for protecting the civil liberties of all Americans—including those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged, and discriminated against.

This administration is continually asking us to put aside our intellect and to trust their intention. I refuse.

This administration would like us to support a man who throughout his career has determined the rights of those who look like me and the constituents I serve are inferior. I refuse.

This administration would like us to sit idly by as Donald Trump tries to overwhelm us into tacit submission to his dangerous agenda. I refuse.

A Trump-Sessions Department of Justice would be not only an attack on our civil rights and equality; it would be an insult to the intelligence of the American people.

Mr. VEASEY. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MCEACHIN).

Mr. MCEACHIN. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for organizing this hour today.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today because I believe that confirming JEFF SESSIONS as Attorney General for the United States would jeopardize the progress we have made for equal rights and against discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, it is an affront to common sense to confirm someone who has criticized the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and believes that this landmark law, which provides all Americans with the right to cast a ballot for candidates in our democratic process, is intrusive. It is an affront to common sense, Mr. Speaker, to confirm a nominee who views an old advertisement calling for the death penalty of people who are later exonerated as a mark of conservatism.

Mr. Speaker, it is an affront to common sense to confirm someone who was previously rejected as a choice for a Federal judgeship to lead a Department that, in part, vets future Federal judges. It is an affront to common sense, Mr. Speaker, to confirm someone who does not believe in justice for all to lead the Department of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this nominee would not act in the best interest of all Americans, regardless of color, gender, country of origin, sexual orientation, or economic status. Mr. Speaker, it is my fervent hope that the Senate of the United States will deny the confirmation of this nominee.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, President-elect Donald Trump's cabinet nominations are nothing short of alarming. With the United States Senate expected to begin nomination hearings this week, we need to ensure that Congress follows a fair and thorough vetting process as we evaluate the suitability of these individuals to fill the various cabinet positions.

One source of concern is the process by which Republicans in Congress are choosing to conduct these nominations. The recent Republican effort to rush the nominees through the process does not invite confidence in our ability to properly consider each individual on their merits. Walter Shaub, Jr., Director of the Office of Government Ethics, raised his concerns of this very fact given that his office is charged with conducting ethics screening reviews of the nominees. The aggressive hearing schedule to consider these nominees is unprecedented and has placed an undue burden on the Office of Government Ethics (OCE) and its ability to conduct thorough ethics reviews. These ethics reviews are essential to the process and help us to identify potential conflicts of interest or other ethical considerations before we confirm these individuals to serve in public office. Director Shaub has stated that it is unprecedented for the Senate to conduct a confirmation hearing before the ethics review process has concluded. This is simply unacceptable and undermines the democratic process.

The nominees themselves are also cause for concern. Namely, I believe that the nomination of Senator JEFF SESSIONS for Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice threatens the best interests and safety of the American people. Senator SESSIONS has served in the United States Senate for twenty years, during which his record on civil rights and other national issues was questionable at best. For example, he voted several times against the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which aimed to hold offenders of violence against women accountable for their actions. He has also taken a very clear position against rights for the LGBT community, which would deny these Americans basic human rights. His positions on criminal justice and government reforms are also disturbing.

Mr. Speaker, I have serious concerns about the means by which my Republican colleagues are approaching the nomination process this Congress. If we are to properly evaluate the qualifications and the ethical suitability of these nominees, we must conduct an exhaustive examination of each nominee based on their merits—not on their politics. The Republicans are failing to uphold these basic principles through their recent actions. In the name of protecting the American people and doing what is best for our country, I urge my Republican colleagues to return to normal order and delay these nomination hearings until OCE can conclude its ethics reviews of the nominees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities against Members of the Senate and the President-elect.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 34

Resolved, That the following named Member be and is hereby elected to the following

standing Committee of the House of Representatives:

(1) Committee on Armed Services—Mr. Smith of Washington.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Members of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

Mr. HIMES, Connecticut
Ms. SEWELL, Alabama
Mr. CARSON, Indiana
Ms. SPEIER, California
Mr. QUIGLEY, Illinois
Mr. SWALWELL, California
Mr. CASTRO, Texas
Mr. HECK, Washington

HOPE IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here tonight at the beginning of this new year. It has been great being in east Texas this weekend, last weekend, hearing all of the hope that has arisen as we have entered this new year, 2017. I think it is going to be a good year.

I am told that just on the basis of a new President coming in who is promising to throttle back, remove so much of the heavy, iron boot off of the throat of the economy that firms are starting to hire again. Businesses are making plans to expand and grow. And then we are seeing reports of plants that are deciding to stay in the United States instead of going elsewhere. There is a lot of optimism out there.

There are young people that are asking what was it like back when you came out of college and had multiple job opportunities for most of the people coming out of college instead of opportunities to live with your parents or your grandparents or a parent or the other parent. They actually had multiple job opportunities, and that optimism has arisen.

As we entered this year, also, it is very sad to see a form of racism and negativity that arises. I have said before publicly, and I think it is still true, we need go back no further than the confirmation hearing for Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. But the more you look, the more you find that the most persecuted person to be in America these days is a conservative African American. If you are Black and you are conservative, you can expect